

CORRESPONDENCE

Positive Eugenics in Practice

To the Editor, *Eugenics Review*

SIR,—I have read with the greatest interest M. Alfred Dachert's article in your April issue, describing the *Jardins Ungemach*, near Strasbourg.

Here we find a man who, instead of sitting with folded arms or joining in the general cry of our conservative-minded eugenicists, "*Wait, wait!—We do not know enough yet!*" has entered with the enthusiasm of the pioneer into a great and far-reaching work for Humanity, *using the knowledge that we have*, and building upon a rock foundation of unassailable truth.

We *do* know that sound human stock breeds true, while defect breeds defect. We *do* know that health and beauty and intelligence and moral stamina are desirable and are largely hereditary; and it is no more necessary to wait until all are agreed upon the exact definition that should be given to the word *intelligence* or the word *health* before attempting to increase their incidence by positive eugenics than it is to put off the organisation of fire brigades until all are agreed upon the definition of the words *fire* and *water*; nor is it more necessary in the one case to discuss whether every sort of intelligence is advantageous than it is in the other to decide whether fires may not sometimes be useful, as, for instance, by burning the houses of evildoers.

Furthermore, it is no more indispensable that we should learn every detail of the working of human genetics before beginning to move in what we know to be the right direction than it would be for a general completely to master military tactics before attempting to take his army to the relief of a beleaguered town whose inhabitants were dying of hunger.

Major Darwin says, in *The Need for Eugenic Reform*, "Woe betide the nation which sees other nations advancing in racial qualities, whilst allowing itself to become so degenerate as to be unable to defend itself when the pinch does come."

Although probably Major Darwin had not positive eugenics in mind when he wrote this, yet the warning undoubtedly applies if we are to allow other nations to steal a march on us in actual practical work of the sort described by M. Dachert, while we are content to watch the dysgenic effects of modern "humanitarian" legislation, and allow the rot to spread far and wide before we can pluck up courage to make any attempt at positive eugenics—which, after all, may prove much more easy of achievement

here and now than effective negative eugenics; because positive eugenics on a small scale (all that is needful to the pioneer) may be tried at will, while negative eugenics needs the aid of legislation or a great nation-wide propaganda, which, in a democracy like our own, takes many long years to achieve an inch of progress.

In my book, *The Survival of the Unfittest*, of which a cheap revised edition has just been issued, I have suggested schemes in positive eugenics which could be put into practice with the absolute certainty of beneficial results, even if the extent or exact nature of such results may be problematic; and in view of the fact that now at least one other nation has initiated such schemes, which, as Mr. Dachert's figures show, are promising well, I beg you will allow me here to make an appeal to all who recognise the supreme importance of eugenics to the future welfare of our race and wish well to England, that they study these schemes, and seriously consider whether it may not be possible, if we meet together for the purpose, to devise some way of *beginning*, here in England, on however small a scale, some pioneer work of the sort described.

Personally I should be very glad to hear from anyone who would care to consider with me such a movement.

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Influence of Pedigree Cattle

To the Editor, *Eugenics Review*

SIR,—It is with some surprise that I read in Mr. Buchanan Smith's interesting article in your REVIEW on *Mendelism and Farm Livestock* that "there is reason to believe that the influence of pedigree animals is waning." As a breeder for about twenty-five years of pedigree Aberdeen Angus cattle this is certainly not my experience, and it is to be hoped that the idea will not gain ground in scientific circles without very sufficient proof.

There is no doubt that pedigree stock has never stood higher with breeders than at the present time. Year by year I have had a better demand for my young bulls for crossing with non-pedigree animals, the purpose for which they are bred.

Prices, however, are low owing to the general agricultural depression, with the result that the best bulls fetch less at sales comparatively than those of somewhat inferior quality. Farmers have not the money to pay more for the better animals.

Mr. Buchanan Smith also says that commer-